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SIGHTINGS 22

A est a si A is a est A

A project by Marion Lessard

September 12 – December 21, 2017

The new cycle of SIGHTINGS on the theme of psychopathologies opens with A est a si A is a est A, a project by the collective Marion Lessard that problematizes various concepts such as unity, identity, order and framing through five voices that discourse on the Same and the Other, the Part and the Whole, Inwardness and Outwardness. Arranged in a circle, each in his/her own space, the five personalities making up "Marion Lessard" become, for the duration of their "exhibition" in the SIGHTINGS cube, both the subjects of viewers' psychological observations and projections and attentive witnesses to their behaviour in the surrounding space. Through multiple embodiments and linguistic inventions, the collective draws us into their puzzling imagination, while reflexively confronting us with our own psychological fabrications.

Katrie Chagnon, curator

In this durational performance piece, Marie Cherbat-Schiller, Jean-Nicolas Léonard, Claude Romain, Élisabeth M. Larouine and Alice Roussel, a collective better known as Marion Lessard, address common notions and issues in a complex entanglement of particular ideas.

As art historian Alethea Bakar puts it, "The five members, normally accustomed to performing in a closed circle, exhibit themselves in a cube, with the sole possibility of interacting with the exterior world through speculation. This 101 day-long non-immersive rendition of A. Roussel's song A est A si A is A est A, not only investigates global conceptual entities, but creates a degree of intelligibility in respect to specific concepts, acting both as what it is and as what it is not".*

The song by Roussel, translated here from the Italian version, provides a valuable entry point into the collective's approach, which has simultaneously been described as perspicuous and disconcerting, incongruous and coherent:

Here is there minus some t.

*Was it a cat I saw? Is it a seat I see? Was AaAaA?
Is it a pool? A collection? A brain?
A bastion? A meeting? A retreat?
A circus? An altar piece? A hell?*

*Divides devise an other. At most totally.
Harmony was nothing but knots on Leibniz's knees. Shall we recollect? Along with shall we?
If one knows not, two will do for three.*

*Here is there minus some t. This is it to all, particularly.
Mind the gap you think shall be.*

* Alethea Bakar, "What? Where? Why? Identification and (Dis)content in Marion Lessard's Contre-Performances," in *Translating Forms and Norms* (Montreal: Quinity Press, 2017) 131-158.

Claude Romain

For more information: ellengallery.concordia.ca